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Danish Press Reviews Defense Proposals

Danish reaction so far to the government's defense budget outline for 1976 has been surprisingly good. The new outline calls for maintaining essentially the same force levels, but with some increase in funds over the next several years.

In the past, the liberal Danish press has often scored government attempts to increase the defense budget. Initial press coverage, however, has either supported the new proposals or been non-committal. One newspaper, the conservative Berlingske Tidende, said the outline was a fair estimate, but questioned the sufficiency of the rather small Danish forces--implying further increases are in order.

Danish military leaders as well as Defense Minister Orla Moller have spoken in support of the outline, especially in light of continuing Warsaw Pact military escalation.

The outline for 1976 should be considered as a run-up to the parliamentary debates for extending the 1973-77 defense agreement, which may get underway during the next Folketing session. Although the traditional Danish anti-military groups have yet to comment, the initial reaction bodes well for at least maintaining current force levels.

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British Defense Ministry Tightens Its Belt

A management review committee has been established within the UK Ministry of Defense to study a paring and streamlining of the current top-heavy military command structure.

This measure was probably undertaken to alleviate any additional cuts to combat forces in the event of further defense budget cuts.

The primary goal of the committee is to reduce expenditures by at least 10 percent by April 1979.

The committee, composed of management consultants and senior military and civilian officials of the defense ministry and civil service, will look primarily at the ministry's structure, but no subordinate headquarters is exempt from review. The key objective is to arrive at a structure that will enable essential functions to be carried out effectively at reduced costs. The committee is also charged with investigating the relocating of various military headquarters from London to economically depressed areas.

Established apparently only last month, the committee is to make an initial report this week. Its final recommendations are due by next September.

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ANNEX

Europe's Future, Europe's Defense

Has Europe at long last begun to move toward the establishment of more effective European defense collaboration?

The question arises because of the apparent coincidence between steps some believe to be a logical prelude to such a development and certain recent--but otherwise apparently unrelated--events. These include:

- recent discussions in the EC of MBFR issues;
- the NATO Eurogroup's November 5 announcement that it would seek to establish two organs-- independent of NATO--to organize and discuss the standardization of arms in Europe and with Europe's North American allies;
- indications in a recent interview of a possible modification of French defense policy;
- an EC Commission plan to establish a group to coordinate European production and sales of military planes;
- the decision announced after the same November 5 Eurogroup meeting to establish a West German-Dutch committee on the possible exchange of defense tasks.

Taken together, can these developments be said to represent the first, tentative steps toward some form of collective European defense effort?

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### The Context and the Prescription

In an article in Foreign Affairs which appeared in 1971, François Duchêne, then director of London's Institute for Strategic Studies, argued that Europe's exposed position in an "era of negotiation" and American retrenchment made prudent a European effort to complement and reinforce the American nuclear guarantee.

Duchêne recognized that prerequisite to such an effort is a willingness on France's part to cooperate. Assuming that, Duchêne argued that cooperation could realistically be expected to take place on two mutually reinforcing levels:

- consultation between governments on broad policies, stimulated by and focused on matters relating to present and future security requirements, and
- contracts or treaty arrangements to establish joint programs in a few functional areas like arms production and procurement.

Duchêne's Europe would thus reject the choice between continued subordination to the US, or, passive acceptance of eventual Russian hegemony. Europe would continue to rely on US strategic might, and American troops and tactical weapons would continue to be deployed there. But their levels would be reduced commensurate with Europe's acceptance of primary responsibility for defense against a local conventional attack.

The first cautious effort toward that goal would be steps to reach some agreement on Europe's future security requirements and to effect closer collaboration in less sensitive, functional areas like arms standardization. If in this early phase France was responsive, then further overtures to draw France into a European concert could be made.

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### The Pattern

The events of the past few months that are cited above might be interpreted to fit Duchêne's scenario:

- The EC discussions of MBFR may qualify as an initial attempt to generate serious discussion of European security matters. Recently upgraded by the participation of France and, in at least one session, by some members' NATO ambassadors, these discussions have been described by their participants as an attempt to get the Europeans to consider the implications of possible conventional force reductions for European political unification in general and defense cooperation in particular.
- The November 5 Eurogroup announcement regarding European arms standardization initiatives may be a step toward the cooperation on a second, functional level that Duchêne prescribed. In addition, the members have stated candidly that the decision to locate the effort outside the NATO framework is a deliberate effort to attract the French.
- Finally, President Giscard's November interview--coming at a time of increased French willingness to cooperate with the allies in planning the use of French forces in war-time--suggests new French interest in building up their conventional forces and transferring more of the French fleet to the Mediterranean.

Taken together, these developments may support the view that France is not only moving closer to the Western defense fold, but may be willing to cooperate in the very areas (i.e., conventional defense with a Mediterranean naval presence) where Duchêne and others have argued Europe's defense contribution would be most logical.

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Two further developments, although longer-term in focus, are also worthy of note:

- The EC Commission's proposal for cooperation in aerospace sales is an attempt to promote collaboration in the area that accounts for approximately 40 percent of spending on arms. Cooperation here apparently remains more interesting to some European industrialists than to their governments, but if successfully launched, it would lay the basis for the industrial reorganization needed to ensure the high technology base on which to build a less dependent Europe;
- The agreement to discuss an exchange of defense tasks between the Dutch and Germans--while motivated in important part by Dutch desires to reduce its defense burdens--invites speculation that it may presage the specialization appropriate to the development of a joint European command. Given the central importance of the German problem in East-West relations, and West Germany's status as the strongest conventional military power in Western Europe, West Germany is the logical place for such talks to begin.

#### The Reservations

There remain, of course, innumerable obstacles to even a pragmatic approach to a collective European defense effort. Even assuming the will to move in this direction now exists, the years required to realize meaningful results may sap the determination to complete the effort. Moreover, at this point there is clearly no consensus that such a development should occur. Only Germany and some of its smaller neighbors with the most to gain in the area of security appear prepared to make the necessary sacrifices to accomplish long-term objectives. France is prevented by domestic political constraints

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from moving too quickly, and in any case, has only begun to re-examine its position. There will have to be careful coordination with the US at each stage of the process to avert frictions that would perhaps risk the premature reduction of American forces. And these are only a few of the difficulties.

Yet whatever the obstacles, the recent initiatives are in line with Duchêne's view of the role Western Europe is likely to seek in the "era of negotiation" and of the way it will seek to progress toward it. Moreover, it is worth noting that in 1971 when Duchêne was writing it was possible to be more sanguine than at present about the future of super-power detente. Since Europe's feeling of being exposed has increased since then, the trend toward more defense cooperation could conceivably be accelerated.

In this vein, it should be noted that Duchêne's prescriptions are well-suited to prevailing political conditions both within Europe and between East and West. First, the prospect of joint procurement arrangements to further the standardization of allied military equipment holds out the possibility of slowing the growth of defense expenditures. Second, while such cooperative efforts may lay the foundation for greater military cooperation in the future, they are unlikely to appear so threatening to the Soviet Union as to jeopardize detente. Yet at the same time, they reassure the Europeans that their future security needs are being planned for in a way that takes into account both the present relaxation of tensions in Europe and the continuing projected growth in Soviet military power.

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